

REMARKS

Claims 2-4, 6, 7 and 9-20 are presented for consideration, with Claims 2, 6, 9 and 19 being independent.

The specification has been reviewed and amended to improve its idiomatic English form.

The claims have been amended in a manner to place the application in condition for allowance. In that regard, Applicants note with appreciation that Claims 6, 7, 19 and 20 are allowed. In addition, Claims 2 and 9 were indicated as containing patentable subject matter.

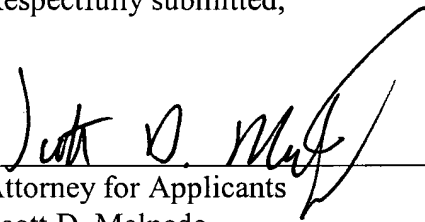
Claims 1, 4, 5, 8, 11-14, 16, 18 and 21 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Koike '931. In addition, Claims 3, 10, 15, 17 and 22 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103 as allegedly being obvious over Koike in combination with either Torgerson '389 (Claims 3, 10 and 17), Sakurada '078 (Claim 15), or Neese '511 (Claim 22).

Without conceding the propriety of these rejections, the claims have been amended as shown above to place Claims 2 and 9 in independent form, with Claims 3, 4 and 10-20 depending from one of these claims. Additionally, Claims 1, 5, 8, 21 and 22 have been cancelled.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration and allowance of this application is deemed to be in order and such action is respectfully requested.

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our Washington, D.C. office by telephone at (202) 530-1010. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



Attorney for Applicants
Scott D. Malpede
Registration No. 32,533

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-3801
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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